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number of articles published in various anthropological journals, there is nothing that we can draw upon for the present work. We have, then, two distinct groups—Schebesta's Efe Mbuti and Putnam's Epulu (Sua) Mbuti, archers and net hunters, respectively.

A word should be said about classification. Schebesta's division of the Ituri Mbuti into Aka, Efe, and Sua is a linguistic classification and, at that, a division not according to Mbuti languages but to the villager linguistic groups—Mangbetu, Lese, and Bira, respectively. It thus corresponds to tribal groupings of villagers and does not seem to be particularly significant for the purposes of sociological analysis. (Schebesta is more concerned with problems of racial and cultural purity, and believes the Efe language to be of Pygmy origin; consequently, he considered the Efe Pygmies to be racially and culturally the purest.

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turally the purest. This assumption, however, is open to question.) In the seeking of a more significant classification, and with every available source to hand, it has appeared that, as might be expected, there are certain differences in social structure related to differences in economic activity, notably hunting technique. It is fortunate that Schebesta's Efe are trackers and archers, while Putnam's Sua Mbuti are net hunters. Thus we have represented two groups not only linguistically and territorially distinct but also distinguished by hunting technique. The importance of this latter distinction appears in the course of the present study. While it is not claimed that such a classification is comprehensive or final, at least it is factual and more directly related to sociological differences than Schebesta's linguistic division. Consequently, we draw on sources in so far as they are

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[p.155-C]

stress [pick out?] that which was pygmy."[1] 114

Schebesta's division of the Ituri Pygmies into three linguistic groups is another result of his preoccupation with the problem of the separateness of the Pygmy and villager and the alleged anteriority of the former. He sets out to find an original Pygmy language and claims to have found it among the Efe archers. For this reason he regards them as the "purest" Mbuti. He also, of necessity, believes that their culture is the purest, being least affected by contact with the villagers. Yet from his account it is plain that the Pygmies he describes live in far closer association with neighboring villagers than do other Pygmy groups elsewhere in the Ituri Forest. This whole question of origin and anteriority is so highly speculative, resting, as it must, largely on conjecture, that again we prefer our own more factual basis of classification according to hunting technique, if only as a temporary measure, until we have sufficient information to make a classification according to structural principles. [194]

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114 197

1. [See footnote, bottom of p.155-D --Analyst]

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the River Nduye (Fig. 3). The band is a relatively large one and shows some interesting tendencies toward fission. It did not always move as a single hunting unit. Sometimes a part of the band would be several days' journey off in the forest, while the rest remained at the village named Camp Putnam. Mrs. Putnam frequently visited the hunting band at its various camps, when of latter years Patrick Putnam was more or less entirely confined by his illness to the village.

Linguistically the band falls into Schebesta's Sua category, using KiBira for the most part as their camp language. They also use a great many KiLese words, however, and the local Bira affirm that they frequently cannot understand what they call "KiMbuti," though they recognize it to be basically KiBira. Like the Bira villagers, these Pygmies also speak some KiNgwana, the *lingua franca* of the territory.

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forest to the east. Their southern limit is 131
bounded by a line from the Ruwenzori, through Beni to Bafwasende. The western boundary runs north from Bafwasende to Panga and to the confluence of the Bomokandi and Uele. (See Fig. 3.) Apart from the Lindi and Ituri rivers, Schebesta says that Pygmies also inhabit the areas near the Epulu, Ngayu, Nepoko, and Poko rivers. Putnam makes no attempt to delimit Mbuti territory, but his notes show that he traveled throughout the area described by Schebesta, with the possible exception of the extreme south, and found Mbuti everywhere, away from the major rivers as well as along their banks.

Schebesta makes the threefold division al- 197.
ready mentioned, of Twa, Tswa, and Mbuti, 101
and further subdivides the Ituri Mbuti into [619]
three major groups: the Aka to the north; Sua to the south; and Efe to the east (Fig. 3). These are linguistic groups, speaking dialects of Mangbetu, Bira, and Lese, respectively.

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betu, Bira, and Lese, respectively. Schebesta believes the Efe dialect to be the remnant of the original Pygmy language, and for this reason he considers the Efe archers to be culturally the purest of the three Mbuti groups. Costermans (1937) disagrees as to both the originality of the Efe language and the purity of Schebesta's particular Efe Mbuti. He asserts that among the Watsa-Gombari Efe, who according to Schebesta were not "true Pygmies," he found hundreds living in exactly the same manner as Schebesta's "true Pygmies." 197 • 101 114

Jadin (1936) considers that of Schebesta's three groups the Efe and the Sua have remained most faithful to their old way of life and finds that, on grounds of blood groups, the purest Pygmies are those who live farthest from their village neighbors, from whom they are clearly distinguishable by their biochemical index. 101 144 184

The Aka live mostly to the north of the Nepoko River, along the length of the Ituri as far east as Gombari. Thence southward, to the east of the Nduye, the Efe archers are found. The Sua roam from the Nepoko to the south side of the Ituri River, from Bomili in the west, almost to Mambasa in the east. Detailed information on the Aka is not available, though they seem to make more use of the spear than the other groups. 101 131 619

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101 The term "Bambuti" was first applied by Schebesta (1933) to the Sua net hunters only, but after his second visit to the Ituri he widened his usage to include all the Ituri Pygmies (Schebesta, 1937). This is the sense in which it seems to be used by the Pygmies themselves and in which we use the term in this [197] study. The threefold linguistic subdivision of the Mbuti is the only attempt that has yet been made to divide the Mbuti into separate groups, but it is not yet certain how far this division has any anthropological validity. It is [619] impossible to speak of Mbuti tribes or sub-[614] tribes, and, although a number of clan names are known, no material available enables us to trace any semblance of a clan system. The only 621 certain units are the nuclear family and the 602 economic association of a number of such [594] families that form a hunting band. Schebesta (1948, 288 ff.) makes this point, using the terms "*Familie*" and "*Sippe*." He distinguishes "*Sippe*" from "*Grossfamilie*," the former being primarily an economic association of incidentally related families and the second laying the emphasis on common descent. The coalescence [614] of several "*Grossfamilie*" into a clan is a concept of little significance to the Pygmy, and the clan, Schebesta writes, is in any case widely dispersed.

621 The size of these hunting bands varies,
162 [P.160-B]

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Mbuti

[P. 161-C]
but Schebesta estimates at only 5 per cent "the proportion of Negro blood passed to the Pygmies" (1938, 111). Costermans (1937), however, who made a detailed study of the Watsa-Gombari population, says that in most villages (in his area anyway) marriages of Lese or Mamvu with Pygmy women are rare.

LANGUAGE

Contemporary linguists are divided as to the question of Pygmy language. Some take the view that a search for such a language is bound to be fruitless; others (Putnam) find traces of it only in personal names and a few place names and names of animals and plants. Schebesta (1952), however, believes that he has found the remnants of the original Pygmy tongue among the Efe archers. Efe and KiBira are the two main camp languages of the Mbuti, the former belonging to the Mamvu-Lese-Mvuba language group, and the latter to the semi-Bantu Bira.

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The Aka speak a Mangbetu dialect. Costermans (1937), who agrees with Putnam that the original Pygmy language has disappeared, even in the heart of the forest, states that everywhere the Pygmies use the language of the village population with which they live in symbiosis, though they retain their own accent. The Mamvu-Lese group, he says, are no exception to this rule. 197 • 114

Most Mbuti are polyglots, though Schebesta claims that the archers among whom he worked spoke only Efe, a fact that he takes to be additional evidence of the Pygmaean origin of this tongue, despite its obvious connection with KiLese. The Epulu Mbuti speak KiBira, KiLese, and KiNgwana. KiBira is used mainly as the camp language but in a dialectal form rendering it almost unintelligible to the Bira villagers. Whatever language the Mbuti are speaking there are certain similarities about the form it assumes, noticeably in the use of a hiatus (the "faucal gasp" noticed by Johnston, 1902, 1904, 532; see also Costermans, 1937) and of a curious singsong intonation. But for the present the question of originality in Mbuti language is still open, and we can state with certainty only that the Ituri Pygmies speak dialectal forms of the same Sudanic and semi-Bantu languages spoken by their village neighbors. 19

[P. 161 - D]

[ARCHERS] 000

without religion. From the descriptions given 776
by the few writers who mention the existence of 346
"spirit houses" and "temples," it may well be 171
that these in fact belonged to villagers. The 114
style of construction described by Geil (1905), for instance, is certainly Bantu. None of these sources offers any acceptable evidence that the Mbuti used these spirit houses and temples.

Schebesta, from the outset of his first visit to 771
the Ituri, was convinced that the Mbuti had a religious system. He finally concluded that it 776
comprised the notion of a dynamic but personal divinity, that it was essentially the same among all Ituri Mbuti, but that it differed from the religious concepts of the neighboring villagers though it was influenced by them. Schebesta [778]
asserts that the belief in a personal God is based on the notion of vital force. God possesses the totality of this force and distributes part of it to worldly beings. Thus God is regarded not as a transcendent creator but rather as a person who lived long ago. He is sometimes confused with the first ancestor and may be represented by the moon.

The confusing abundance of names and terms 776
used by the various Mbuti is partly due to the 778
different languages spoken by both Mbuti and 192
villagers, and partly to villager influence, but it 197
in no way denotes any fundamental difference in 199
this basic concept of a personal God accompanied by the belief in a vital force.

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Mbuti

ORIENTATION

There is little call for comment on this section. Despite their linguistic differences, it seems that the Ituri Mbuti form a broad cultural unit physically differentiated from other Pygmy or Pygmoid groups, notably the Twa of the Kivu area and the Tswa farther west. However, before any conclusion can be reached, we need more detailed studies, of the Pygmies of equatorial and western Africa in particular. 101

The hunting band appears to be the largest political unit, except in opposition to the villagers when, it seems, Pygmy bands may unite regardless of clan or lineage considerations. There is no evidence that, during the period when the Pygmies were used as mercenaries, they ever fought with one another at the behest of the villagers. 621 628 648

Despite Schebesta's assertion that *efe* is, in fact, the remnant of the original Mbuti language, linguists disagree on this point. Van Bulck (G. van Bulck, 1948, 1953; V. van Bulck, 1948, 1952) questions it. Professors Tucker and Meeussen (in conversation) indicate that the possibility of determining its correctness with any degree of certainty is remote. This attitude 197 • 114

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 243-A]

was also Putnam's, although he was keenly interested in the problem and spoke all the major villager languages of the area fluently. All we can say is that the Ituri Mbuti now speak the same languages as the villager tribes with which they are or have been in closest contact.

Questions of origin and history can be answered only by speculation and do not concern us at the moment.

As stated, physical anthropology is too specialized a subject to be treated here, though the findings of detailed studies would be of great value not only in helping to answer questions of origin, but also in tracing affinities between different Pygmy and Pygmoid groups, estimating migratory movements, and determining the degree of miscegenation with villager tribes and the relative direction of such miscegenation. This last consideration is of particular importance with reference to the Mbuti-villager relationship.

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
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Zaire FO1

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gathering economy of the former from the adapted forest cultivation of the latter. Perhaps, above all, it distinguishes the values of the forest people from those of the villager invaders from the plains. The Mbuti adapt themselves to their environment; the villagers adapt the environment to their own way of life in so far as they can, compromising when they cannot. It is not difficult to see the possible psychological implications of this attitudinal difference and the profound difference in religious and social values that either rise from it or are strengthened by it. In the opposition between forest values and non-forest values we find the highest degree of opposition between the Mbuti and their villager neighbors.

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P 181 182

THE SOCIAL UNIT

P 184

At this elementary point in our survey of Mbuti society, we begin to find significant structural differences between one group and another. These differences are not related to linguistic differences. Moreover, we find that, with the possible exception of the archers described by Schebesta, the Mbuti are polyglots.

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While there may be one preferred "camp language," most of the members of any one camp speak three different languages with more or less equal fluency. Each individual's linguistic abilities depend to some extent on the direction of his kinship ties and to some extent on his attachment to one villager tribe or another. The differences in social organization can be related directly to differences in hunting technique. Concerned as we are with the situation as we find it, we need not deal here with the alleged origin of these hunting techniques nor the relative "purity" of the Pygmy groups practicing them.

The immediate and most obvious difference found in a comparison of the accounts of the archers and the net hunters is in the size of their hunting bands which is related directly to the requirements of the particular technique. A distinct process of fission and fusion related to the economic size of the band is observable among the Epulu Pygmies. A successful net hunt cannot be carried out with fewer than seven nets, with an optimum of about 15. When a net-hunting band falls below 10 families (i.e., 10 married men with nets), hunting becomes difficult, because there is little allowance for sickness, or for the men and women required to

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12 [101] study as a comparative base from which the study of the Mbuti as a whole may be more speedily and accurately advanced. It is also believed that although the bulk of the study involves a single hunting band, much of the basic structure uncovered applies to other Mbuti bands. The major limitation, however, is that we are here concerned primarily with one band rather than with the Mbuti as a whole, yet this was an inevitable necessity.

Other limitations arise from the lack of monographs on comparable groups of forest nomads, from my consequent reluctance to generalize too far from so narrow a base, and from the difficulty of presenting the principles of organization of a society that does not possess the formal institutions found in larger and more sedentary societies. Nonetheless, such principles plainly must exist, and while our general objective is to outline the form and structure of the Mbuti hunters and gatherers of the Ituri Forest in the northeast Congo (Leopoldville), we also have the more particular objective of searching for the elusive principles that integrate each apparently autonomous Mbuti band, giving it an identity of its own by which it recognizes itself and its integral but diffuse relationship with other bands. For it is in light of these principles that we must try to understand the effective but problematical relationship that pertains between any Mbuti band and the village cultivators who are its neighbors.

12 114 Another limitation derives from the lack of reference material on the Mbuti, which necessitated the gathering of ethnographic minutiae in the field and their presentation here, adding considerably to the bulk despite vigorous sifting. However, without a firm ethnographic base no analysis would be possible, so the provision of such a base is considered a prime prerequisite.

I have elsewhere (Turnbull, 1956) given reasons for rejecting existing sources for both purposes of general comparison and particular analysis, though this is not to deny their possible value in other fields. My own subsequent account of the Mbuti (Turnbull, 1961) was in no way intended as an academic study, nor is it suited for use as such, though it served a useful purpose in helping the field worker detach himself from the subject of his study, enabling him to examine it more critically.

[197] In my examination of other sources (1956) it was suggested that subsequent field work might discover a more meaningful division of the Ituri Mbuti than the linguistic division made by Schebesta, as

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the languages referred to, although spoken by the Mbuti, were evidently of non-Mbuti origin. Consequently another objective of the present study, based on further field work, is to begin to look for valid structural differences that do exist, following up the contention (*ibid.*) that one would expect to find such differences between the Mbuti who hunt by net and those who hunt with bow and arrow. The boundaries of the net-hunters and archers incidentally correspond, very roughly, to the linguistic boundaries drawn by Schebesta between the Sua- and Efe-speaking Mbuti: the Aka, to the north, although somewhat divided amongst themselves, offer a third category, some of them using the spear as their prime weapon.

To all these ends it was decided to make a further field trip in which one hunting band would be studied intensively throughout a calendar year, and in which as much comparative material as time and field conditions permitted would be gathered from other hunting bands. It was decided in advance, in the light of previous personal experience, that the sacrifice of a whole year to the study of one small band was essential, even though it would mean that any final conclusions about the general nature of Mbuti society would have to be delayed until a number of other such studies had been made. A band of either archers or net-hunters is a highly mobile, volatile entity, demanding of the field worker the utmost persistence in both physical and intellectual pursuit. It was quite obvious, also from previous experience, that the band not only constantly changes location, but it also constantly changes in composition. The significance of these fluctuations would only be discovered, it was felt, by following them right through their course in one given hunting territory before attempting any comparative studies among other bands. Above all it was essential in one band to find out what the significant social groupings were, and what principles enabled them to maintain any kind of consistency and continuity in the face of perpetual change. How was the band divided, along exactly what lines did the characteristic splits occur, what forces operated to hold the band together and to divide it? The scope of the one-band study was aimed at answering such questions and others that concern band relationships with local villages of cultivators. It was hoped to arrive at an understanding of the true nature of the over-all Mbuti/Villager relationship in this area, following up on the suggestion made earlier (Turnbull, 1956, 363–64) that this relationship was not one of master/servant, still less of slavery, and probably not even of symbiosis.

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Mbuti

niques do not affect the basic structural unity. The fact that the Mbuti fall into different linguistic groups is no more than accidental, and is of recent historic origin. The linguistic division is that propounded by Schebesta (1938, pp. 24–26). In effect he uses the terms Aka, Efe and Sua to refer to those pygmies who were in territories invaded and settled by the Ngbetu/Zande, the Lesé, and the Forest Bira respectively; these pygmies apparently adopted the languages of the newcomers to their respective areas and they have maintained some kind of relationship with their Negro neighbors ever since.

The question of language is by no means settled yet, and it may be that either KiLesé or KiBira may in fact prove to be a language of pygmy origin adopted by the Negro invaders. At the moment there is no significant evidence available to this effect, and given a situation where small isolated hunting bands (of an absolute maximum of thirty nuclear families and a possible minimum of three) are brought sharply into contact with larger, more permanent, technologically more advanced peoples with a tribal system, we can only assume the likelihood that the pygmies adopted the languages of the newcomers, losing most of their own.

In this case the linguistic division suggested by Schebesta most certainly only refers to a post-contact situation and does not necessarily point to any indigenous difference between these three groups of Ituri hunters and gatherers. The fact that, very approximately, the linguistic boundaries also correspond to the boundaries between pygmy hunters who emphasize the spear, the bow and arrow, and the net may be no more than a mark of acculturation with the three distinct Negro groups; on the other hand it may point to some earlier distinction, but in any case is of much more significance in any contemporary study of social structure.

In dismissing the linguistic differences as any indication of internal differentiation it is worth pointing out that any pygmy from any area in the Ituri can recognize though not comprehend any other pygmy speaking a totally different language because, throughout, the intonation is remarkably similar, absolutely distinctive, and different by far from the intonation used by the Negroes whose language is being spoken. This is one small pointer toward an earlier linguistic unity among all Ituri pygmies, as is the fact that they all seem to recognize themselves by the term Mbuti. One hears this term far more frequently than any other when pygmies are distinguishing themselves from villagers, in all parts of the forest. Even in distinguishing them-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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197 101 selves from neighboring pygmies, place names are more likely to be used than the terms Aka, Efe or Sua. Although I have formerly used both BaMbuti and Bambuti, I here use the form Mbuti, as this eliminates difficulty in accurately representing singular and plural forms, and is in keeping with the current practice of the International African Institute.

101 144 In previous writings and occasionally in this work, the term "Negro" is used to differentiate the pygmy hunters from the immigrant farmers, but it now seems far better to use the term "villager," for the significant difference, as seen by the people concerned as well as seen by the anthropologist, is one between a forest people and a village people; the racial factor is structurally negligible. Precise tribal names cannot always be used, as in some villages the tribal composition is mixed, and as any one band of Mbuti may have contact with two or even three different village tribal groups.

121 128 I have made other modifications to my earlier terminology, necessary simply because of increased understanding. I now use the term "band" where previously I used the term "group" to refer to a unit of Mbuti hunters, who, regardless of their kin relationships, recognize and share a common hunting territory. As will be seen, the term refers more to territorial boundaries than to the boundaries of kinship. The term "group" I now employ to refer generally to one villager group as opposed to another; i.e., Sudanic and Bantu, say, or to distinguish between all net-hunters and all archers. But wherever used, it is used only in its general sense, the context making its meaning plain. It does not have any specific academic significance, not being a translation, for instance, of Schebesta's (1948, p. 291) "Lokalgruppe."

By "family" is meant a nuclear family of a man, his wife and their sociologically recognized children, who are cared for and brought up in all respects in the same way whether or not they are biological offspring. The terms "clan" and "lineage" do not enter much into our analysis of actual Mbuti kinship, but are used as theoretical concepts by comparison with which we can more satisfactorily understand the Mbuti system. A discussion of their meaning is, then, an integral part of the test.

In the course of discussion of the magico-religious system, certain usages specific to the situation will be defined; here I would just mention my own understanding of the terms "ceremony" and "festival." "Ceremony" has, when I use it, the connotation of formal ritual, of an established pattern of behavior that must be followed according

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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hunting but also working on plantations, cutting wood and drawing water. None of this was true of the Pygmies that I knew. But I did agree with Schebesta about the *molimo* (a religious festival). Although he had not seen it himself, from what he heard about it and about similar practices among other groups of Pygmies, he felt sure that it was essentially different from the practices of neighboring Negroes, however similar they might appear to be on the surface. This certainly tallied with my own experience.

The general picture that emerged from his studies was that there were, living in the Ituri Forest, some 35,000 BaMbuti Pygmies, divided into three linguistic groups, speaking dialects of three major Negro languages. The Pygmies seemed to have lost their own language, due to the process of acculturation though traces remained, especially in tonal pattern. Only in the easternmost group did Schebesta feel that the language had survived to any recognizable extent. These were the Efe Pygmies who lived among the BaLese, an eastern Sudanic tribe with a not very savory reputation for cannibalism, witchcraft and sorcery.

But in spite of this linguistic difference, and the fact that the Efe also differed in that they did not hunt with nets but with bow and arrow and spear, Schebesta believed that all the BaMbuti were a single cultural unit. They tended to live in small groups of from three families upward, moving around the forest from camp to camp, though always attached to some Negro village with which they traded meat for plantation products. There was no form of chieftainship, and no mechanism for maintaining law and order, and it was difficult—from Schebesta's account—to see what prevented these isolated groups from falling into complete chaos. The most powerful unifying factor, it appeared, was the domination of the Pygmies by the Negroes. Schebesta cited the ***nkumbi*** initiation as an example of the way Negroes forced the BaMbuti to accept their authority and that of their tribal lore. Remembering what I had seen, living in an